Lord Of The Dance

Aidan Kelly, C. Taliesin Edwards, Ann Cass, and Jenny Peckham-Vanzant

In response to many requests for information about the neo-pagan version of Lord Of The Dance...

The words are credited to Aidan Kelly, C. Taliesin Edwards, and Ann Cass; the tune (when it isn't "Simple Gifts") is credited to Jenny Peckham-Vanzant, and may be an old shape-note hymn.

Aidan Kelly and C. Taliesin Edwards may be the same person.

According to the article in the filksong magazine "Filker Up #3," (a reprint from *Kantele* #12, Fall 1982, and written by Cathy Cook- MacDonald), the first four verses were written by Kelly and Edwards, four more by Ann Cass in 1975-6, and the four seasonal verses by Ann Cass in 1976. Gwydion recorded the song, with variant lyrics, on his *Songs Of The Old Religion* tape (not the entire song, though).

A version of it can also be found on the tape *Celtic Circle Dance* , by Joe Bethancourt.

> She danced on the water, and the wind was Her horn
> The Lady laughed, and everything was born
> And when She lit the sun and its' light gave Him birth
> The Lord of the Dance first appeared on the Earth

> (Chorus): Dance, dance, where ever you may be
> I am the Lord of the Dance, you see!
> I live in you, and you live in Me
> And I lead you all in the Dance, said He!

I danced in the morning when the World was begun
I danced in the Moon and the Stars and the Sun
I was called from the Darkness by the Song of the Earth
I joined in the Song, and She gave Me the Birth!

I dance in the Circle when the flames leap up high
I dance in the Fire, and I never, ever, die
I dance in the waves of the bright summer sea
For I am the Lord of the wave's mystery

I sleep in the kernel, and I dance in the rain
I dance in the wind, and through the waving grain
And when you cut me down, I care nothing for the pain;
In the Spring I'm the Lord of the Dance once again!

I dance at the Sabbat when you dance out the Spell
I dance and sing that everyone be well
And when the dancing's over do not think that I am gone
To live is to Dance! So I dance on, and on!

I see the Maidens laughing as they dance in the Sun
And I count the fruits of the Harvest, one by one
I know the Storm is coming, but the Grain is all stored
So I sing of the Dance of the Lady, and Her Lord:

The Horn of the Lady cast its' sound 'cross the Plain
The birds took the notes, and gave them back again
Till the sound of Her music was a Song in the sky
And to that Song there is only one reply:

The moon in her phases, and the tides of the sea
The movement of the Earth, and the Seasons that will be
Are the rhythm for the dancing, and a promise through the years
That the Dance goes on through all our joy, and tears

We dance ever slower as the leaves fall and spin
And the sound of the Horn is the wailing of the wind
The Earth is wrapped in stillness, and we move in a trance,
But we hold on fast to our faith in the Dance!

The sun is in the southland and the days grow chill
And the sound of the horn is fading on the hill
'Tis the horn of the Hunter, as he rides across the plain
And the Lady sleeps 'til the Spring comes again

The Sun is in the Southland and the days lengthen fast
And soon we will sing for the Winter that is past
Now we light the candles and rejoice as they burn
And we dance the Dance of the Sun's return!

They danced in the darkness and they danced in the night
They danced on the Earth, and everything was light
They danced out the Darkness and they danced in the Dawn
And the Day of that Dancing is still going on!

I gaze on the Heavens and I gaze on the Earth
And I feel the pain of dying, and re-birth
And I lift my head in gladness, and in praise
For the Dance of the Lord, and His Lady gay

I dance in the stars as they whirl throughout space
And I dance in the pulse of the veins in your face
No dance is too great, no dance is too small,
You can look anywhere, for I dance in them all!

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